

The First of the Series of Treatises
Breezes,
From the Gardens of Firdaws

الأول من سلسلة المقالات
رياح
من جنات الفردوس

التوحيد العملي

The Tawhīd of Action

Imām 'Abdullāh 'Azzām
(May Allāh have mercy upon him)

At-Tibyān Publications

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وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ

“And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Gardens, the width of which is that of the heavens and the earth” Al ‘Imrān: 133

التوحيد العملي

The *Tawhīd* of Action

“At-Tawhīd Al-‘Amalī”

Segment of a speech given by the martyred *Shaykh* of the Mujāhidīn

Imām ‘Abdullāh ‘Azzām
(May Allāh have mercy upon him)

دارالکتاب

In the Name of Allāh, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

... While living in Afghānistān, I have realized that *Tawhīd* cannot penetrate into the soul of the human being, nor will it intensify and strengthen – the way it does in the fields of Jihād.

This is the *Tawhīd*, regarding which the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه و سلم said:

"I was sent before the hour with the sword..."

Why?

*"... so that Allāh is worshipped Alone with no partners with Him."*¹

So: The settling of *Tawhīd* in this world, is done by the sword... not by reading books, not by studying the books of 'Aqīdah...

Indeed, the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه و سلم taught us that *Tawhīd Al-Ulūhiyyah* – which was the reason why he was sent, so that *Tawhīd Al-Ulūhiyyah* can be established in the people, and on the earth... He taught us that this *Tawhīd* cannot be learned by study lessons...

No, it can only be brought up and raised (through *Tarbiyyah*) in the souls, through the confrontations in battles, and the events which take place from the stances taken in the face of the *Tawāghīt*... through the sacrifices which the soul of the human puts forth...

Every time the soul of a human sacrifices something for this *Dīn* – this *Dīn* will open up its subtle beauties for him, and it will unveil its treasures for him.

And it is appropriate to mention in this discussion, that some of those people who do not understand the reality and nature of this *Tawhīd* - they accuse these people (i.e. the Afghāns) through whom Allāh has honored the Muslims, through whom Allāh has elevated the significance of every Muslim in the world, through whom Islām is being lifted up from a bottomless pit, and placed onto the international platform, contesting against forces whom people call "Super Powers" in today's world... those who have returned *Haybah* (fear, dread, awe, respect) to Islām, which was absent due to the absence of Jihād...

¹ Part of an authentic *Hadīth* narrated by *Imām* Ahmad on the authority of Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما . Declared *Sahīh* by Al-Albānī in "*Irwā' Al-Ghalīl*" (1269).

“... and Allāh will remove fear and dread from the hearts of your enemies and He will place Al-Wahn (weakness) in your hearts.” So we said: “And what is Al-Wahn (weakness)?” He (peace be upon him) said: “Love of this world and dislike of death.”²

And this fear and dread which the enemies should have of us, can never return to us, except by the sword, by fighting and killing...

So as I was saying, some people have not really understood the real nature of this *Tawhīd* – they just read a few words about it, and now they begin to say, “The ‘Aqīdah of the Afghān contains some shirk and bid’ah, and things.”

*“And some of those amongst us said to them: Your ‘Aqīdah has some problems.
Refuge is sought with Allāh from such baseless slander!
The flames of shirk are not extinguished, except by crimson rain.³
And can Tawhīd be established, except at the point of a sharp white edge?⁴
O feminine ones sitting! Take it easy, because it’s your eyesight which has the problems.”*

Those who truly understand what *Tawhīd* really is... what the *Tawhīd* of Action is: *Tawhīd Al-Ulūhiyyah*... *Tawakkul* (firm reliance) upon Allāh Alone, fearing Allāh Alone, worshipping Allāh Alone...

This cannot be understood just by reading some words in some books. Yes, *Tawhīd Ar-Rubūbiyyah* (which was recognized even by the *mushrikīn* of Quraysh ⁵), can be understood by attending a lecture or two.

² The entire *Hadīth* is narrated from Thawbān رضي الله عنه , that he said, The Messenger of Allāh (peace be upon him) said: “The nations will gather upon you like the hungry gather around their plate.” So, we said: “O Messenger of Allāh! Will that be because of our lack in numbers?” He (peace be upon him) said: “In those days, you will be many in number, but you will be like the foam on the surface of the sea- and Allāh will remove fear and dread from the hearts of your enemies and He will place Al-Wahn (weakness) in your hearts.” So we said: “And what is Al-Wahn (weakness)?” He (peace be upon him) said: “Love of this world and dislike of death.” And in another narration of Ahmad: “Your disliking of *Qitāl* (fighting).” Recorded by Imām Abū Dāwūd and Imām Ahmad, refer to *As-Silsilah As-Sahīhah* (956) where Al-Albānī declared it *Sahīh*.

³ Meaning, blood.

⁴ Meaning, the sword.

⁵ See *Al-‘Ankabūt*: 61-63, *Luqmān*: 25, *Az-Zumar*: 38, *Az-Zukhruf*: 9 and 87, *Yūsuf*: 106. And refer to the *Tafsīr* in *At-Tabarī* (21/11-12), *Al-Qurtubī* (13/361), *Ibn Kathīr* (6/301), *Al-Baghawī* (3/474), *Al-Baydhāwī* (3/42), *Al-Jalālayn* (pg. 429), *Ar-Rāzī* (25/90-91), *Abus-Sa’ūd* (4/345), *Ibn ‘Atiyyah Al-Andalusī* (11/415), *Aboo Hayyān Al-Andalusī* in “*Al-Bahr Al-Muhīt*” (7/157), “*Tafsīr Al-Wasīt*” of *Al-Wāhidī* (3/425), *Al-Qāsimī* (13/4761-4762), *Tafsīr Tajrīd Al-Bayān* (12/191).

We understand that: Indeed, Allāh has a Hand, which is not like our hands. And we understand that through the principles of *Asmā'* and *Sifāt* (the Names and Attributes of Allāh) – that we affirm for Allāh (Glorified and Majestic is He) the Most Beautiful Names and the Noble Attributes which have been affirmed by the Messenger of Allāh in the authentic narrations, and in the Noble Book... and we affirm all these, without doing any *Ta'wīl* (figurativeness), nor *Tahrīf* (distortion), nor *Ta'tīl* (denial), nor *Tashbīh* (resembling), nor *Tamthīl* (similitude). And we say, that Allāh “rose above the Throne”, we do not say that He “conquered it”. And *Istiwā'* (the Rising of Allāh over the Throne) is something which is known, but “mannerism” (i.e. How He rose above it) is unknown, and believing it is obligatory, and asking about it is an innovation.

So this, everyone of us memorizes it! You've memorized, right? Or no? This is something easy – Do you know why? Because this is the theoretical aspect of *Īmān* (which does not require action)... it is a matter of knowing it and affirming it. And never was a single Prophet sent for this reason, ever.⁶

Rather, the only reason they were sent, was to establish *Tawhīd Al-Ulūhiyyah*, the *Tawhīd* of Action. Having *Īmān*, in that Allāh – and I mean firm and sincere reliance upon Allāh – that truly, He is the Creator, the Sustainer and Provider, He is the Giver of Life and Death (and to have this belief manifested through actions in one's stances in life)... this is not just some theoretical belief, that is *Tawhīd Ar-Rubūbiyyah*. Rather *Tawhīd Al-Ulūhiyyah* is only affirmed through stances taken in life... and the '*Aqīdah* of *Tawhīd Al-Ulūhiyyah* cannot be established in the soul of a human – specifically *Tawakkul* (firm reliance) upon Allāh in the matters of sustenance (*rizq*), in matters of the appointed time (death), in matters of rank and status... The soul of the human cannot establish these upon *Tawhīd*, except when going through such long events (of battles), and going through this long journey, and going through enormous sacrifices –only then will this *Tawhīd* start to be constructed in the soul, day after day, brick by brick; and then, the construction of *Tawhīd* will become tall in the soul of the person.

Let me ask you: Who understands *Tawhīd* more? That elderly man... the brothers once narrated to me that: One day, planes were bombarding us, and all of us hid, except one old man named Muhammad 'Umar; he looked at the plan while it was bombing the Mujāhidīn, and he said, “O Lord! Who is greater? You or this plane? Who is more superior? You or this plane? Will you leave these slaves of Yours to these planes?” And he lifted up his two hands like this, towards the sky, and he spoke to Allāh (Glorified and Majestic is He) using his *Fitrah* (natural instinct). Before he even finished his words, the plane

⁶ For the evidences and deeper explanation of this matter, refer to *Kitāb At-Tawhīd* by Shaykh Al-Islām, Muhammad ibn 'Abdil-Wahhāb رحمه الله , and also his book, *Kashf Ash-Shubuhāt*.

dropped, even though nothing was shot at the plane. And the Kābul Radio Station announced that the plane which was downed had a Russian general in it...

So this (*Tawhīd*) is an '*Aqīdah*... a liberation of the human soul from *Khawf* (fear)... fear of death and position...

And here is *Shaykh* Tamīm Al-'Adnānī amongst us... and *Shaykh* Tamīm Al-'Adnānī, on the 30th of Ramadhān of 1406, when the Russians launched an operation using three Communist branches – meaning, 3,000 (troops) supported with tanks, planes, and missile-launchers... One launcher can have 41 missiles placed in it at once, all of them being launched at the same time... 41 missiles coming at you, causing the mountain which is under your feet to tremble and quake... mortars, machine guns, and heavy artillery... five Russian brigades, one of which was a Specnaz brigade – an extremely fast action battalion - named "Russian Lightning" ...

And *Shaykh* Tamīm was in this battle... and *Shaykh* Tamīm weighs about 140 kilograms, and that's why whenever the *Shaykh* gets mad at someone, he says, "I will sit on you," that's it! And what that means is, that he is going to kill you!

So *Shaykh* Tamīm was sitting under a tree, (saying) "*O Provider of Death! (I seek) Shahādah in the last day of Ramadhān,*" it was the 30th of Ramadhān, the last day... so he began reciting the *Qur'ān*... so he finished reciting the entire first *Juz'* while bullets were whizzing right in front of his face, and beside his ears; no one could believe that he was still alive under that tree, while the planes were bombarding, and the enemy mortars and missiles were being fired at his direction...

The tree, it was completely in flames, it was burning completely... You wouldn't even be able to say a full sentence to someone sitting next to you. If you were to say, "*Do you have bullets?*" – When you are saying, "*Do you have,*" – the next word would not be uttered due to a rocket striking you, or mortar, or bomb – and your sentence would never be finished (such was the severity of the situation).

Every time *Shaykh* Tamīm came across a verse mentioning Paradise, such as:

أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

*"... they are dwellers of Paradise, they will dwell therein forever."*⁷

He repeated it, and repeated it, he said, "Perhaps the bullet will strike me with Paradise."

⁷ Al-Baqarah: 82

أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

“... they are dwellers of Paradise, they will dwell therein forever.”⁸

So that’s how he finished the first *Juz’*, and the second *Juz’*... and when he came across a verse mentioning the Fire, he hurried it, fearing that he might be struck with a bullet while reciting about the Fire... so he finished the third *Juz’*, the fourth *Juz’*, the fifth *Juz’*... all of this, in the midst of horrors which would make you forget your own name...

Wallāhi O Brothers! The hardest for us was during the *Istinjā’*, because it was impossible for someone to think that he can go to fulfill *Istinjā’* and still remain alive, he fears that he will be martyred during *Istinjā’*... this was what used to be a burden upon us...

So then, the *Shaykh* said, “O Allāh! If not *Shahādah*, then at least a wound!” Six minutes past, seven minutes... four hours straight, while he was under continuous bombardment, as if it was raining...

Shaykh Tamīm said, “After that day, I realized that there is no death... none can die, except in that specific second pre-decreed by the Lord of the Worlds, period. And taking daunting risks does not bring the appointed time closer, nor does safety and security distance death.”

This is something he read in the *Fatāwā* of *Shaykh Al-Islām* Ibn Taymiyyah... he didn’t read it in *Al-Majmū’* of An-Nawawī, nor in the *Hāshiyah* of Ibn ‘Ābidīn, nor in the books of Ibn Al-Qayyim... he read this from (someone whose, i.e. Ibn Taymiyyah) veins were being burnt, whose soul was being pulverized underneath “torpedoes (of his day)”⁹... the *‘Aqīdah* of *Tawhīd*... of fearlessness of death and provisions...

⁸ Al-Baqarah: 82

⁹ The *Shaykh* is comparing Ibn Taymiyyah to those other Imāms, because Ibn Taymiyyah was unique in comparison to those mentioned, and indeed, Ibn Taymiyyah is of those Imāms who were waged Jihād against the *kuffār*, and was imprisoned and expelled and suffered much at the hands of the enemies of Allāh – unlike the other Imāms mentioned. And because of this, Ibn Taymiyyah’s words contained such wisdoms and hidden beauties, which other scholars who did not go through the similar hardships and sufferings, their words did not contain such wisdoms. So *Shaykh* ‘Abdullāh ‘Azzām is demonstrating this point, of how with Jihād, hardships, and sufferings in the Path of Allāh – the wisdoms of this *Dīn* and its treasures of knowledge are bestowed upon the Mujāhid. This was demonstrated when *Shaykh Al-Islām* Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله narrated from Imām ‘Abdullāh Ibn Al-Mubārak and Imām Ahmad Ibn

You find a person living a normal life, if it was said to him, "The intelligence agents came by your house," – he, and Allāh knows best, will become paralyzed. Or if you told him, "I saw (CIA) agents standing at the door of your house," – that's all it takes... for an entire week he won't be able to sleep or rest, even if he misses Salāt Al-Fajr! For even seven days he can't fear Allāh, the way he fears the saying, "I saw an agent in front of your home..."

So why does he fear the agents? Because he is afraid for his sustenance, or that his appointed time of death (will come). Is there any other reason? Not at all... it's either fear of death, or fear of losing sustenance. So this notion, in the minds of mankind, has become the petrifying ghost which pounces upon them in their beds, causing them to never shut their eyelids!!

But if you did not fear for your sustenance and your life, you wouldn't be afraid of them either. Like, if it was said to you now, "The Russian intelligence is vexed at you," – would it affect you? Even African Intelligence would (make you afraid), because there are ways for them to reach your home (in Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, etc), so you would still be afraid! So Jihād is what we see as the only solution for this disease... disease of these notions of fear of the agents, fear of the appointed time (death), fear of loss of provisions.

The most valuable thing which a human possesses, is the soul (*Rūh*)... and when you place your soul upon your palm, begging Allāh to take it, day and night – to purify it if He accepts it... becoming sad if the Lord of the Worlds does not choose it: Then after that, what could you ever fear, other than Allāh?

*"When a young man becomes habituated to diving into the fatal fields,
Then the easiest thing he passes by is mud."*

Someone is exposed to death everyday – will mud affect him?! The least bothering thing he passes by is mud... So *Tawhīd*, and its being settled inside the soul of the human... you have now known that it cannot be brought up inside the soul – meaning, it cannot become rooted firmly inside the soul – except by Jihād.

And as a basic rule, much of the knowledge of this *Dīn* cannot be grasped except by Jihād, and that is why Allāh (Most High) says:

Hanbal that they said, "If the people disagree (*Ikhtilāf*) regarding anything, then look at what the Mujāhidūn say - since the Truth is with them; because Allāh says, ***"As for those who wage Jihād in Us (for Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths."*** [Al-'Ankabūt: 69] Refer to "*Majmū' Al-Fatāwā*" (28/442).

فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ

“Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth, so that they may gain understanding in the Dīn, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware (of evil).”¹⁰

The word “*they*” in the part, “*so that they may gain...*” is referring to going forth (*An-Nafīr*) to gain understanding of the *Dīn*... some scholars went to the other opinion and said that, “No, the party which sits behind, that is the one which gains understanding in the *Dīn*.”

But the opinion which was taken as more authentic by Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنهما , and At-Tabarī¹¹, and Sayyid Qutb – is that the troop which goes forth in the Path of Allāh, that is the one who gains the understanding of the *Dīn*... and that is the one which realizes its hidden beauties, and the *Dīn* reveals its pearls to them.

Sayyid Qutb (may Allāh have mercy upon him) said:

“Verily, this *Dīn*, does not reveal its hidden beauties to a cold sitting “*Faqīh*” who does not struggle to establish this *Dīn* upon this earth. This *Dīn* is not a cake which you can refrigerate in your brain. Rather, this *Dīn* is only understood through struggling to return it into the sphere of life, and building its society once more.”

Yes... this *Dīn*... you will not grasp it, except according to what you give for its sake... Give for its sake, then it will give you... the rule of “Give and Take”...

Sacrifice! Then the Lord of the Worlds will open the doors for you...

Put forth sacrifices for this *Dīn* – Allāh (Most Glorified) will teach you His *Āyāt* and the *Ahādīth*...

As a basic rule, you will not be able to understand many verses, except when it is a reality you are going through – a reality of Jihād.

¹⁰ At-Tawbah: 122

¹¹ Included amongst those who hold this to be the correct explanation of this verse, is the *Imām* of the Ascetics from the *Tābi’īn*, Hasan Al-Basrī, may Allāh be pleased with him; refer to the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Jarīr At-Tabarī under this verse for detailed discussion on this matter.

Sure, for example, *Sūrah At-Tawbah*... *Sūrah Al-Anfāl*... *Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān*... these chapters... How can you possibly understand them without struggling for this Jihād? How will you understand these? Is it possible for these to be understood?

And from here, comes the first benefit from amongst the benefits of Jihād: Liberating the human soul, establishing *Tawhīd Al-Ulūhiyyah* – meaning, *Tawhīd Al-‘Ubūdiyyah*, the *Tawhīd* of Action... establishing this in the heart and soul, until the man begins behaving with the Lord of the Worlds, as if he is seeing Him... he behaves in response to the Divine Attributes of Allāh, that He is Near (*Al-Qarīb*)...

(A town named) Arsalān was surrounded by tanks from every direction and place, and there was a small group (of Mujāhidīn) there who were guarding a munitions storage as the tanks were approaching, and they (the Russians) wanted to capture them alive, and none remained for them, except Allāh... (they said) “O Allāh, to not give a way to a single *kāfir* upon me!” – then suddenly the battle turns around, against the tanks, voices are heard, yet no one is seen in the area, and there is none in the area except the small group of brothers... the tanks are scorched and the Russian troops retreat... not a single shot was fired at them... How can those who go through this, not trust upon the Lord of the Worlds?

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ

“And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge, Help, and Assistance). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (Alone).”¹²

... *Shaykh* Jalāl Ad-Dīn Al-Haqqānī said, “In the first year of the Jihād, people were not capable of reaching us. We were fewer in number, and we were at the top of the mountain; no one could come close to us, no one was able to give us support... we couldn’t even light a fire to heat some tea, lest it would cause smoke to rise (and the enemy would see our positions)... and this was to such a degree, that even the regime didn’t know where we were, and the earth was narrowing down upon us... food rations finished... If you become ill, you can endure patiently... freezing temperature, you can endure patiently... But starvation, where? How can you endure that? How can you live without eating anything? I prayed *Salāt Al-Fajr*, and sat in a state of distress on my prayer rug, and I was overtaken by drowsiness and sleepiness... and then suddenly, someone shakes my shoulders from behind like this [*demonstrates*], he was sitting on the prayer rug like the *Jalsah* (sitting position) of prayer, (and he said) “O Jalāl Ad-Dīn! Your Lord remained feeding you for 30 years and you didn’t do Jihād in His Path – So if He forgets you, will you then do Jihād in His Path?!”

¹² Al-Baqarah: 186

And that is why an Egyptian brother who was with us, his wife asked him (before he joined the Mujāhidīn in Afghānistān), "Where will you work?!" He told her, "I am going to directly work in the Foundation of the Lord of the Worlds!" And he said, "So-and-so works under so-and-so Business Company, and so-and-sp works for so-and-so governor... And I will work directly for the Lord of the Worlds. Who is better than me!? Who is higher than me?! Whose life is more honored than this life!?"

And that is why the statement of the Prophet ﷺ is so absolutely true in reality, when he said, "Among the best of lives for people, is a man who clasps the reins of his horse in the Path of Allāh, flying on its back; whenever he hears a call (for battle) or advancement towards the enemy - he flies to it, seeking death and being slain with eagerness ..." ¹³

Thus: The first obligation is the *Tawhīd* - singling out Allāh (Exalted and Majestic is He): *Tawhīd Al-'Ubūdiyyah*; and behaving with Allāh (Glorified and Lofty is He) in accordance with His Names and Attributes; behaving with *Al-Latīf* (The Most Courteous and Kind) according to His Courteousness and Kindness; and behaving with *Al-Qarīb* (The Near One) according to His Nearness; and to behave with *As-Samī'* (The All-Hearer) according to His All-Hearing - and so on and so forth.

Secondly, the *Tarbiyyah* of 'Izzah (i.e. growing, and bringing up, and raising honor and dignity) in the souls of the people. And this is because humiliation and defeat is a consequence of fear... and courage and boldness bring about

¹³ Refer to Muslim (1889), and the *Sharh* by An-Nawawī (13/34). Declared *Sahīh* by Al-Albānī in *Sahīh At-Targhīb* (1226, 2736), and *Sahīh Al-Jāmi'* (5915). The full *Hadīth* ends with, "And a man on top of a mountain peak or on the bottom of a deep valley, establishing the *Salāt*, giving the *Zakāt*, and worshipping his Lord until death visits him. People see nothing from him but good." And in other narrations, "seeking death or being slain...". And in the *Musnad* of Abū 'Awānah (5/59), "A time will come upon mankind, when the best of them is the man who grasps the reins of his horse in the Path of Allāh, whenever he hears a call (for battle), he gets on its back, and then he seeks death eagerly." And yet in another *Hadīth*, the Prophet ﷺ asked, "Should I not inform you of the best of mankind in status?" The Companions responded, "But yes!" So he said, "A man grasping onto the head of his horse in the Path of Allāh, until he dies or is killed." Al-Albānī declared it *Sahīh* in *As-Silsilah As-Sahīhah* (255), and *Sahīh At-Targhīb* (1298, 2737). And amongst those whom we hope Allāh will include them amongst the ones mentioned in this *Hadīth*, are those Nineteen Lions, those brave brothers of ours, who flew on their horses, eagerly seeking to kill and be killed in the Path of Allāh. May Allāh grant them the Highest Abodes in Paradise, along with the Beloved Ones, and have mercy upon them.

dignity and honor. But fear for wealth, status, and this life – brings about humiliation and subjugation; and freeing one's self from these things, bears the fruit of honor.

*"The honor is upon the harsh backs of the stallions,
And glory is born from the wombs of sleepless nights and nocturnal journeys..."*